



TOWN OF CLARKSTOWN, NY

WEST NYACK HAMLET VISION PLAN

PREPARED BY



BEHAN PLANNING
AND DESIGN

PREPARED FOR



FARMERS MARKET AREA?
OAK SPRING CT (no more) continuation of OAK SPRING RD

Town of Clarkstown West Nyack Hamlet Vision Plan

The Town of Clarkstown

Alexander J. Gromack, Supervisor
Shirley Lasker, Deputy Supervisor
Frank Borelli, Councilman
George Hoehmann, Councilman
Stephanie Hausner, Councilwoman

Vision Plan Advisory Committee Members

Mark Brecher
Bert Dahm
Hon. Bob Jackson
Madeline Muller
Laurie Peek
Dr. Jack Rosen
Russell Rolnick
Jose Simoes, Town Planner
John Tobin

Support Staff

Edward Lettre, Public Works - Town of Clarkstown
Erika Moschetti, Town of Clarkstown
Shirley Thormann, Planning Board - Town of Clarkstown
Jose Simoes, Town Planner

Special thanks to:

West Nyack Fire Department
West Nyack Public Library
and all of the others who assisted with
this project and participated in the Vision Plan process.

Table of Contents

Section I: Background

Introduction	Page 1
Hamlet Revitalization in Clarkstown	Page 2
The Hamlet of West Nyack - Study Area	Page 3
Public Workshop - June 12, 2008	Page 4

Section II: Existing Conditions & Recommendations

Utility Poles and Wires	Page 7
Traffic	Page 9
Parking	Page 11
West Nyack Park	Page 13
Trees	Page 16
Sidewalks	Page 18
Stone Walls	Page 20
Signs	Page 22
Lighting	Page 24
Presence and Character	Page 25
West Nyack Way - Intersection	Page 26
Richards Corners	Page 29
Clarksville Inn - Intersection	Page 30

Section III: Vision Principles & Illustrations

Hamlet Gateway Areas	Page 32
Strawtown Road	Page 33
West Nyack Road / Sickletown Road Intersection	Page 36
West Nyack Road / Post Office	Page 37
West Nyack Park	Page 38
West Nyack Way Intersection	Page 39
West Nyack Road - East	Page 40
Additional Recommendations	Page 41
Public Workshop - November 16, 2009	Page 42

Section IV: Conclusion

Page 44

Appendix

Page 47

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Residents of West Nyack familiar with the hamlet's history—from the colonial period to modern times—will share the notion that the community center is an “in between” place. In the colonial days, the hamlet was a crossroads between the riverfront activities at the Port of Nyack and the inland roads to the west. Then, traffic moved slowly and relatively quietly along the old turnpike. Today, the hamlet remains an “in between” place, though to much larger (and not-so-quiet) facilities like the New York State Thruway and Route 59. Despite the growth and change which has occurred over time, the hamlet center retains a fair bit of the charm of yesteryear, and offers promise for enhancing its unique and historic character. With this in mind, a community endeavour of protecting and enhancing the character of this hamlet was born.

The goal of this endeavour was to create a conceptual “Vision Plan” for the future growth and improvement of the hamlet. This vision plan focuses on identifying conceptual enhancements to the major public roads and key community areas within the hamlet center. From these concept plans, more refined plans can then be developed to guide future growth. These ideas can range from simple, short-term enhancements to long-range capital improvement programs. With a town investment in the public realm (sidewalks, plantings, lighting, etc.), the private sector is also encouraged to continue to appropriately improve their properties to make the hamlet a more attractive center for both the community and commercial activities alike.

*“We will transmit the community
not less but greater, better,
and more beautiful than it was
transmitted to us.”*

~ Portrait of West Nyack -1973

HAMLET REVITALIZATION IN CLARKSTOWN

The Town of Clarkstown has invested substantially in its hamlet centers in recent years, embarking on several ‘downtown revitalization’ projects to encourage pedestrian activity and investment in local businesses. Each of the revitalization projects has included the installation of new sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, decorative benches, community gathering spots and pocket parks, roadway repairs and repaving, improved flow of traffic, drainage and enhanced architectural design standards.

With the support of civic associations, businesses and other community based groups, the town has already completed revitalization projects in Congers (2004), Nanuet (joint project with the Town and County in 2007) and Valley Cottage (2008). The New City revitalization broke ground in 2009. This most recent project has benefitted from the earlier projects by including enhanced design and constructions details. The town has been successful in receipt of state and federal grants that will help offset the cost of the New City project. In addition, the county is partnering with the town by including Congers Road in New City as part of its capital improvement program to coordinate with the town’s efforts.

The revitalization projects for Congers, Nanuet and Valley Cottage were completed by the town as in-house projects. Since then, revitalization plans for New City and West Nyack have moved forward with the assistance of a planning and engineering firm. Likewise, upcoming revitalization plans for Central Nyack are scheduled to begin shortly after the completion of a drainage and road improvement project there.

The visioning for West Nyack and New City have benefited from the experience of a design firm, as well as the counsel of a separate town-appointed advisory committee for each respective hamlet. These committees are comprised of both residents and town officials who work together to help guide the formation of the vision plan. Residents were invited to participate in these hamlet planning initiatives as an important element of the decision making process.

The Town’s commitment to hamlet revitalization has encouraged several businesses to invest and re-invest in these areas. Many of the recent major developments in New City have been a part of the town’s revitalization efforts there, such as a new CVS, Stop & Shop, TD Bank (formerly Commerce) and Starbucks. The town has worked tirelessly to develop public-private partnerships to set the stage for other redevelopment projects, façade improvements, building additions and other property enhancements. Improvements to Village Square in West Nyack are a part of this revitalization continuum.

Like the vision plan for New City, this vision plan for West Nyack will be instrumental in guiding the design of the revitalization plan. It will also serve to orchestrate efforts related to zoning improvements, design guidelines, roadwork, utility upgrades as well as identify other opportunities.




Recent revitalization projects in other hamlet areas have resulted in streetscape enhancements including new sidewalks, paving, curbs, street trees, lamp posts, brick pavers, benches, and bus stops.

THE HAMLET OF WEST NYACK - STUDY AREA

The study area for the Hamlet of West Nyack includes portions of West Nyack, Strawtown and Sickletown Roads. The intersection known as Richard’s Corners provides the northern terminus of the study area and one of the four “gateways” into the hamlet center area. The vision plan focused on the central portion of West Nyack Road between the eastern terminus at the CSX rail line junction and the intersection with Strawtown and Sickletown roads. Opportunities or constraints throughout the entire study area that were brought forth during public comment or site analysis, however, are also addressed within the vision plan.



 Hamlet Center Gateway Areas



PUBLIC WORKSHOP JUNE 12, 2008

The Advisory Committee sponsored a public workshop on June 12, 2008 at the West Nyack Firehouse. Approximately 100 residents attended this meeting. Following a brief welcome and introduction from Town Supervisor Alex Gromack and Councilwoman Shirley Lasker, an overview of the Town's ongoing Comprehensive Plan process was presented by town officials. The workshop was then turned over to representatives of Behan Planning and Design to guide the participants in discussion.



A break-out table of local residents discuss design opportunities for the hamlet.

Behan Planning and Design gave a short presentation describing the purpose of this workshop and provided examples from the New City Hamlet Vision Plan as well as a short overview of existing conditions in the hamlet. It was explained that the public input from this workshop, and future meetings in West Nyack, would be utilized to generate recommendations for the West Nyack Hamlet Vision Plan. The participants were presented a list of possible issues and topics regarding West Nyack that should be discussed at the workshop, including: neighborhood character, sidewalks and crossings, street trees and street lamps, the West Nyack Way intersection, utility lines, the park, parking, traffic, and other potential issues of interest.

Following the presentation, workshop participants were asked to complete a short image evaluation survey as a warm-up exercise. Each person received a scorecard and was asked to rate a series of images projected on the screen. The images showed various examples of development that could occur in or around a community such as West Nyack. Participants scored each image on a scale from +3 (most appropriate for the study area) to -3 (least appropriate for the study area) based on the general appeal of that image. After all the images were scored, the moderator from Behan Planning and Design reviewed them again with the audience; asking by a show of hands how each was scored and asking volunteers to describe why they scored the image as they did. The resulting conversation stimulated thinking about appropriate urban design and provided some initial insight into what constitutes good and bad design in the eyes of those that participated.

Workshop participants were then divided into several smaller "break-out" groups who gathered at individual tables for discussion. Each group worked with a facilitator to identify specific areas or characteristics of the West Nyack Hamlet that people wanted to "stay the same", and those that they would "like to change". Groups were asked to brainstorm some possible solutions or alternatives to the things they would like to change. At the end of the evening, a spokesperson from each table volunteered to present their group's ideas to the entire audience, so that everyone could hear the range of suggestions that were generated.

A summary of the ideas and comments from the workshop are provided below - a list of all comments recorded at the meeting, as well as a summary of the image evaluation survey, are included in Appendix A.

WORKSHOP COMMENTS SUMMARY

Generally the comments reflect a desire to maintain the "small town" character of the West Nyack hamlet, including preserving historic buildings and markers, large old trees, and the park. Others indicated that existing businesses and the people that live in and near the hamlet make a positive contribution to West Nyack.

There were also several areas that residents felt could be improved upon.

Hamlet Character / Appearance:

Maintenance of properties was brought up as a concern for the appearance of the hamlet, both vacant and developed properties. The entrances to the hamlet were identified as needing improvements. It was pointed out that the hamlet is not overly pedestrian friendly and would benefit from more and better sidewalks, installation of “old fashioned” street lights, and planting of additional street trees. The Route 59 overpass was also identified as in need of aesthetic improvements.

Sidewalks & Pedestrian Access:

Improving the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists was a recurring theme heard from the public. Several suggestions for replacing asphalt sidewalks with concrete, and installing sidewalks where currently none exist were also heard. Connectivity between the hamlet and the surrounding neighborhoods was also brought up as a needed element for future projects.



Locations within the hamlet (yellow dashed lines) where sidewalks are either missing or in need of improvement.

The Park / Recreation & Open Space:

While it was noted that there are some parcels that could be used for additional parkland, the focus of the discussion was on the existing park near the center of the hamlet. The overwhelming theme was that the park is nice, but could be greatly improved. Suggestions included adding events at the park, incorporating more amenities, such as a playground, and making trail connections within and contiguous to the park. Several people also pointed out that there is no parking near the park, which likely contributes to the existing lack of use by town residents.

Architecture:

Commercial facades were noted to be in need of improvement within the hamlet, as well as the addition of landscaping in front of some of the businesses. It was noted that having a unifying theme for signs, landscaping, architecture, etc. would be beneficial for the hamlet.

West Nyack Way - Intersection Triangle:

The general perception for this intersection is that it is awkward and several accidents occur or nearly occur on a regular basis. Changes to the alignment and/or circulation of the intersection was suggested. Improved landscaping was also suggested, given the “gateway” nature of the intersection.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP JUNE 12, 2008

WORKSHOP COMMENTS SUMMARY (CONT.)

Roadways / Street Conditions:

Truck traffic and too much traffic, which is moving too fast, was a recurring concern heard at the meeting. There appears to need to reroute truck traffic so it does not pass through the hamlet, and also find ways to slow down all the traffic passing through the hamlet. There were also aesthetic/noise concerns associated with Route 59 that could be addressed.

Parking & Curbcuts:

As previously noted, there is a lack of available parking associated with the park, as well as a lack of sufficient parking at the library and generally throughout the hamlet. Several properties were also identified as having access problems - either too restricted, or too open with lack of defined entrances and exits.

Lighting & Pedestrian Amenities:

If new lights are going to be installed, it was suggested that they be “antique” style, use solar energy if possible, and only be installed if the utility poles can be moved, otherwise the sidewalks will become even more cluttered than they already are. It was also noted that the existing lights at the park are too bright.

Utility Lines:

It was noted that the existing utility lines are “unsightly” and moving or burying the lines was suggested.

Crosswalks:

Given the traffic concerns, it was noted that crossing the street in West Nyack is often difficult. Some specific areas suggested for new or improved sidewalks included the intersection of West Nyack Road with Sickletown Road, and in front of the library.

Planting / Landscaping:

Local residents currently maintain some of the landscaped areas in the hamlet, and it was suggested that more areas could be maintained this way. Adding planters (either on the ground or hanging from lamps) along the commercial portions of the hamlet was also suggested.

Signage:

There were several suggestions for welcome signs at the gateways to the West Nyack hamlet. It was noted that some historic markers are in need of refurbishing, while others should continue to be maintained, and others could be added. Some signs in the hamlet are perceived to be out of place, and a consistent look to the signs in the hamlet was suggested.

Economics:

It was noted that there are several vacant commercial spaces in the hamlet that should be filled, which could be made viable by more pedestrian traffic. A proposed commuter train stop in the hamlet was seen as both a potential benefit for local business, but also a burden on the hamlet’s parking availability. There was also concern over how any improvements to the hamlet may be paid for in the future.

Flooding:

Flooding within the hamlet is perceived to be a major concern for area residents and business owners. There were several suggestions regarding reconfiguration of wetlands and streams in the area that may ease the flooding problems.

SECTION II - EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the public workshop, Behan Planning & Design conducted a field survey of the study area to map the existing conditions and identify problem areas and design opportunities within the hamlet center. The following pages summarize the primary findings and recommendations regarding the most prevalent elements discovered.

UTILITY POLES & WIRES

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Utility lines are considered a visual distraction which detract from the historic character and charm of the hamlet. Identified as a concern by residents that attended the public meeting, there are several options to be considered for eliminating some or all of the overhead wires. In several places the utility poles themselves create obstructions for pedestrians and accessibility problems for anyone with a disability.



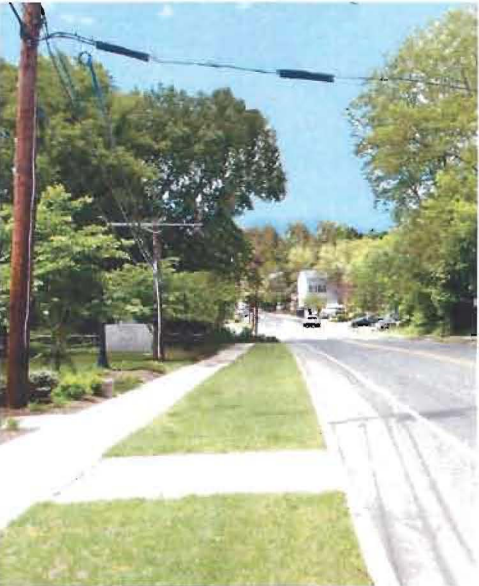
Utility poles obstruct the pedestrian way and create problems for accessibility throughout the hamlet.



Utility lines are considered a visual distraction which detract from the historic character and charm of the hamlet.



EXISTING



UTILITY POLES MOVED



STREET TREE ADDED

UTILITY POLES & WIRES

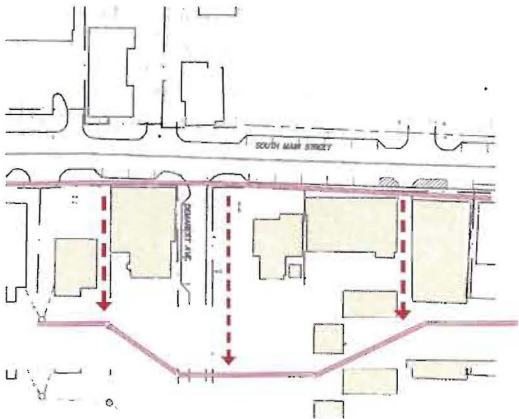
RECOMMENDATIONS

Option 1: Design mitigations can help to hide or divert attention from the utility poles and lines. Placing the poles to the inside of the sidewalk and strategically locating other design elements which become the foreground, such as street trees and light poles, allow the utility poles to fade into the background.

Option 2: “Backlotting” poles and wires where feasible. Backlotting consists of moving poles to the backside of properties, requiring easements from each landowner whose property is crossed with the utility line. The advantage of this solution is that the main street is cleared of the poles and lines, providing clear pedestrian ways with minimal visual clutter. The feasibility of this solution requires analysis of different alignments for the utilities across backyards, and the cooperation of all landowners involved. This option may be feasible along the Route 59 right-of-way which could potentially serve portions of the southern side of the study area.

Option 3: Underground the utility lines. This solution, while optimal, is very costly and requires both the cooperation of the utility company and the property owners. The feasibility for limited application is constrained due to cost at this time, but it is something the community may explore given enough interest and availability of resources.

A combination of all of the above options may be the best solution. Some fiber optic lines have already been placed underground, while some of the existing overhead lines may not be in use anymore and could possibly be removed. Underground utilities may be able to be placed in trenches which would already be required for providing power to new streetlamps. Transformer pads would be required at various locations with underground electrical service, and may have to be located on private property.



Backlotting utility lines requires easements from property owners, however it is a feasible option for removing lines from main streets when undergrounding is not practical.

TRAFFIC

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Truck traffic has been identified as a problem within the Hamlet, as well as general traffic congestion in some areas. The noise and odor generated by the trucks, as well as the concern for pedestrian safety, detracts from the pedestrian environment and experience of walking through the hamlet.

In addition to trucks, overall traffic is a concern, especially related to vehicle speed and pedestrian safety.

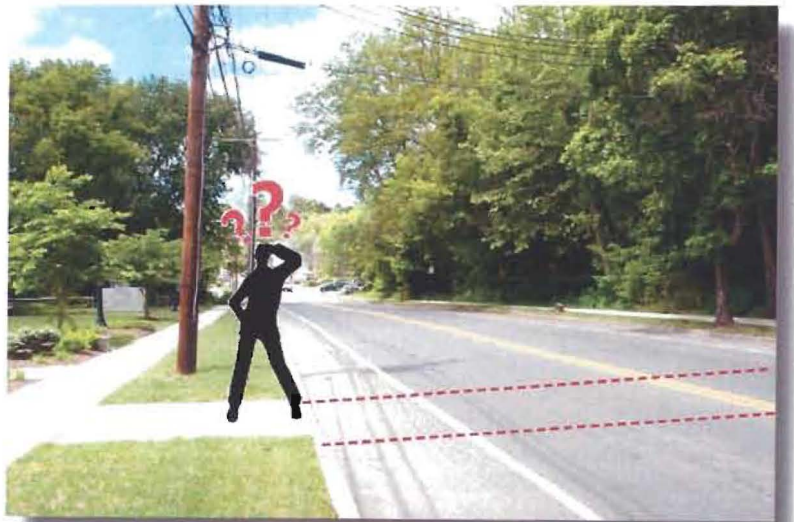
Streetscape improvements should attempt to address these traffic concerns where possible by using features and visual cues to slow vehicles and discourage cut-through truck traffic.



Truck traffic through the hamlet has been identified as a concern towards pedestrian safety and comfort.

SPEED AND PEDESTRIANS

A number of key locations within the hamlet lack safe or marked pedestrian crossing areas. By providing crosswalks in key locations it creates visual cues for drivers to slow down and connects pedestrian pathways for greater overall walkability through the hamlet.



Pedestrian connections to road edges should be completed by providing crosswalks at key points.



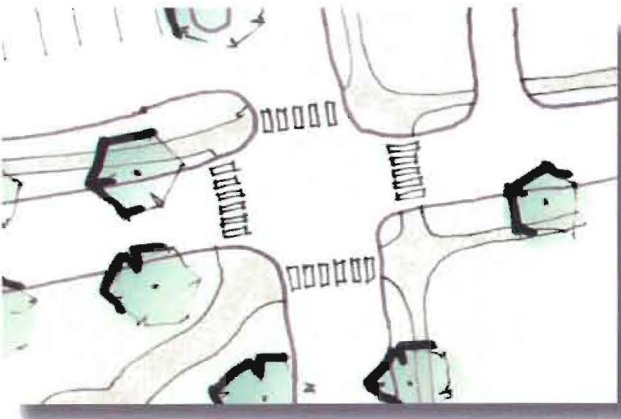
Central planted medians provide spaces for vegetation and pedestrian connections that are refuge from moving traffic.



Crosswalks provide visual cues to drivers to slow down and yield to pedestrians.



Mid-block crossings at key connection points such as the park would provide additional places to cross the street as well as help to calm traffic through the hamlet center.



Well marked pedestrian crosswalks at 4-way intersections.

TRAFFIC

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Discourage Truck Traffic
Calm truck traffic with signage and traffic speed mitigations which could make shortcuts through the hamlet undesirable for them. Work with business owners at local truck destinations to reroute traffic to alternate routes.
2. Crosswalks
Crosswalks provide a safe way for pedestrians to cross busy roads and intersections, and provide visual cues for traffic to slow down. Some of the crosswalk design and materials used in the other hamlet projects are starting to wear out and fall into disrepair. It would be preferred to not use the same methods and instead use a more durable design and use them to enhance the character and walk-ability of the hamlet.
3. Speed tables
Speed tables at certain mid-block crossings may provide a safer crossing while also slowing traffic and deterring truck traffic from passing through the hamlet if it is not necessary.
4. Narrower road widths
Narrowing the road width through the hamlet, or in select areas, to +/-10' lanes will enhance the quaint character, slow traffic, and create safer pedestrian street crossings.
5. On street parking
On street parking at select locations along the hamlet could help to slow traffic speeds, provide a buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway and support commercial vitality.
6. Other design mitigations
Other design considerations, which would help to slow traffic including street trees, central planted medians and roundabouts, could be considered.

PARKING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Parking in the hamlet is somewhat limited with very uneven distribution, leading to the perception that more parking is needed. While some businesses have relatively ample parking, other areas have almost no off-street parking at all. Many parking areas are stacked in tight areas with “front-in” parking which creates difficult and dangerous situations for vehicles backing out into oncoming traffic and conflicts with pedestrians. Much of the parking problem is attributed to the relatively small parcel sizes found in the hamlet, which makes it difficult to find additional area for designated parking.

The properties which have large parking areas are few and far between, and are mostly dedicated to the business they serve such as the Clarksville Inn, Village Square, Post Office, Funeral Home and Plasti-Craft. These larger lots could potentially provide shared parking arrangements during the “off-peak” hours, although there is relatively little need for them during those times.

It is believed that additional parking would help to promote more business activity and help with the hamlet revitalization. However, another (opposing) factor to consider is that the small amount of visible parking available in the hamlet helps to reinforce the historic charm of area. Care should be taken to see that any new parking proposed is small in scale or otherwise located so that the dominance of the asphalt area does not undermine the desired character.

Some discussion has been made to whether a Parking Authority or similar body could help with this, or if the town should pursue acquiring additional land to locate public parking.

The Park and the Post Office were both identified as potential problem areas regarding parking. The Park itself has no parking, which is regarded as a disincentive to visit. Across the street, the Post Office is very busy during certain periods of the day, leading to overcrowding and awkward access problems. A larger lot here or alternate access and traffic flow has been recommended.



Front-in parking at commercial areas creates challenging conditions for vehicles and pedestrians. Parked cars are forced to back out into traffic lanes and there is no sidewalks or protected area for pedestrians.



The post office parking lot has been identified by residents as busy and difficult to get in and out of easily

PARKING

RECOMMENDATIONS

Additional parking should be provided at key places, distributed throughout the hamlet. Front-in parking arrangements should be replaced with safer parking designs wherever possible. Due to the space constraints, on-street spaces could be provided in some places. This may require a cooperative effort of landowners to change some “private spaces” to “shared public spaces.”

Changes to on-street parking could create a more attractive character for the hamlet streetscape, especially when created in conjunction with other streetscape improvements.

One design principal that could work in some places includes the creation of a one-way access lane which could wrap around the building to provide a separate exit and smoother vehicle circulation routes. Angled spaces could replace existing layouts in some parking areas, creating more room to back out of a space when leaving.

Curb-cut reductions and sidewalks could be investigated around the Village Square property, and are being discussed as part of their ongoing renovation efforts.



Parallel parking distributes parking locations, buffers pedestrians from moving traffic, and provides safer maneuvering for vehicles than front-in parking while creating an attractive streetscape atmosphere.



WEST NYACK PARK

EXISTING CONDITIONS

West Nyack Park is centrally located in the hamlet across West Nyack Road from the post office. Surrounded by natural woodland and wetland, it is a great community asset. It is treasured by residents, however, it is not a highly used space due to a number of factors.

Currently, there is no parking provided at the park, which limits its use mostly to pedestrian travel, however the sidewalks in front of the park terminate at the edges and do not connect to the larger sidewalk network. There are parking areas nearby at the Village Square and Post Office which could be utilized for larger demand events, if needed.

The park itself is relatively small and in close proximity to passing vehicles, which does not create the sense of place, seclusion or retreat which would attract visitors.

Finally, many community members felt that more activities and “things to do” would bring them to the park including a playground, or a farmers or crafts market.

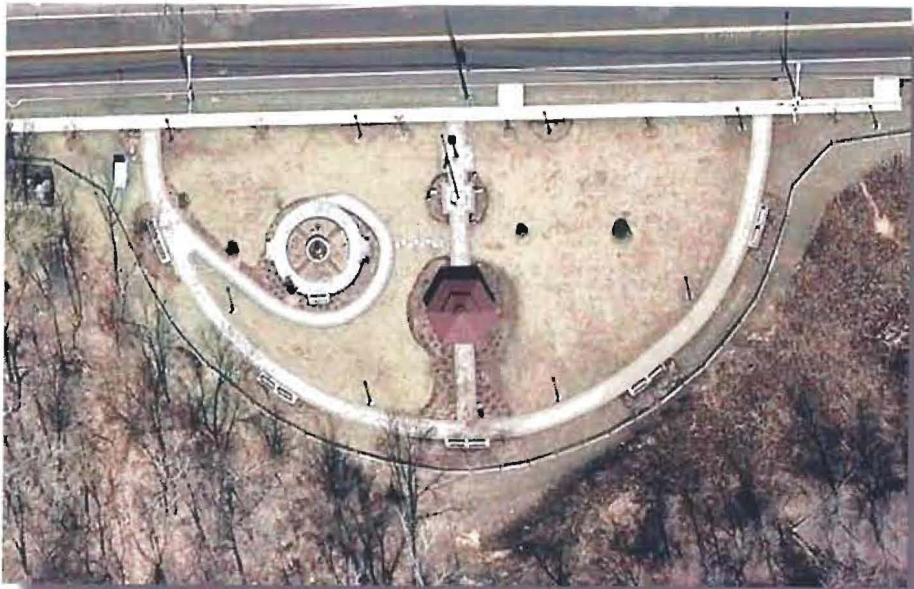
Some residents have also noted that the street lamps in front of the park are somewhat bright and give off a “colder” light than desired.



The park is small and in close proximity to the road, making it difficult to provide a sense of seclusion or retreat from the passing vehicles.



A fountain in the park is dedicated to community firefighters



The existing park features include a gazebo, street clock, flag pole, benches, pedestrian scale lighting, and a fountain. The layout of the park and the straight sidewalk to the gazebo creates a formal arrangement with strong central axis.

WEST NYACK PARK

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a few changes could be implemented to improve the park, including the addition of some dedicated parking, pedestrian connections to the surrounding area and additional landscaping to soften its appearance. These ideas have been incorporated into the following concept sketch.



PARK CONCEPTS

- Parallel parking spaces along the front of the park.
- Trees and shrubs added around the fountain to create a private seating area.
- Trees and shrubs added to create more of a buffer from the roadway.
- Playground.
- Provide screening from roadway which helps alleviate sense of exposure from within the park, and creates a sense of mystery which invites a passerby to enter.
- Expand circulation around the outside of gazebo for a more open feel.
- Playground and picnic tables added for activity and enjoyment of the park.

- Wildlife and nature viewing area incorporated into a boardwalk path along the side.
- Benches turned to face each other and backed by trees and shrubs to create more intimate areas for talking, reading, and people watching.



Existing bench layout.



Bench “rooms” may be created by facing benches toward each other and using plantings to enclose the spaces.



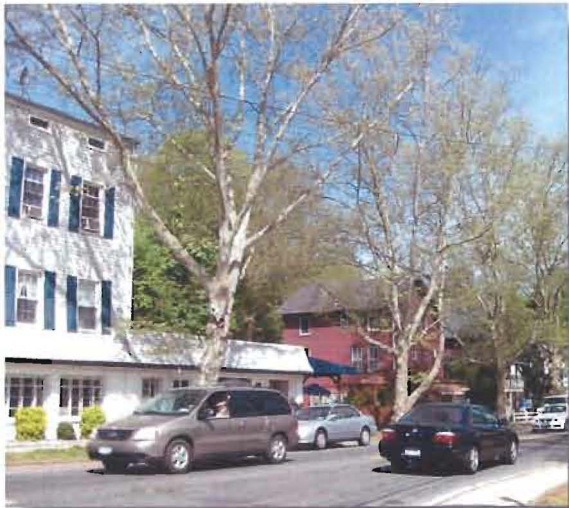
Additional trees and plantings along the front of the park would provide more of a sense of mystery from the outside and a level of cover or privacy from the inside. The park becomes defined as it’s own “space” which is defined at a comfortable human scale and buffered from the passing vehicle traffic.

TREES

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The character of West Nyack is truly enhanced by the existence of mature, healthy trees along its main corridors which provide a sense of age and allure. While impressive, the trees sometimes also create limitations for pedestrians and present design challenges to providing much needed sidewalk improvements and new pedestrian connections.

During discussions with West Nyack residents, a recurring theme was that these trees are important to the character of the neighborhood, and should be protected whenever possible.



The abundance of mature trees in West Nyack is one of the most defining features of the hamlet character.



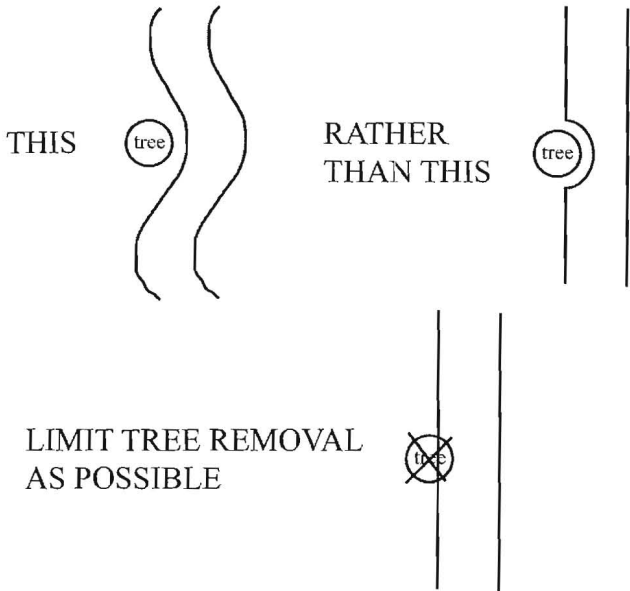
TREES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintain as many mature healthy trees as possible while designing future improvements, and provide a consistent package of new street trees to line the roadways in places where there are none.

Design new sidewalks around trees where possible, and introduce a serpentine design which not only preserves the tree but the tree then appears to be an inherent part of the sidewalk design.

West Nyack Hamlet could also institute a “Heritage Tree” program to document the location and species of trees throughout the hamlet. Residents and business owners can take responsibility for particular trees through an adoption program which highlights stewardship and pride for the hamlet’s trees.



This existing tree behind the Village Square building is very close to the street and creates a potential conflict with any proposed sidewalks or road improvements.

Sidewalks created at this location could be designed in a “serpentine” pattern which winds around the tree. This would allow a new sidewalk to be installed without removal of the tree, and creates a more natural or organic feel to the hamlet design.

In some cases, winding sidewalk designs may require small retaining walls and the cooperation of neighboring property owners.



SIDEWALKS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The sidewalks throughout the hamlet represent a wide variety of conditions. In some areas, new concrete sidewalks have been installed which are in good condition and provide an ample buffer from the vehicles on the adjacent roadway. Asphalt sidewalks are provided in some areas, but are directly abutting the roadway and do not provide a strong curb or pedestrian buffer. In other areas, sidewalks are not present at all.

Several locations have sidewalks which were very narrow - constrained between the roadway and adjacent property lines, fences or retaining walls. Other locations were somewhat obstructed by utilities such as telephone poles and fire hydrants. These conditions present difficulties in properly upgrading them to acceptable standards.



Some sidewalks in the hamlet are in excellent condition - poured concrete, ample width and separated from the roadway by a buffer strip.



Several areas in the hamlet have less than ideal sidewalk conditions, including very narrow widths, lack of a buffer between the sidewalk and road, utility obstructions or lack of any sidewalk at all.

Sidewalk obstructions, such as those pictured at left, can restrict pedestrian movement, especially for people with disabilities.

In many of these areas, improvement or upgrades will be difficult due to space constraints.



SIDEWALKS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pedestrian connections are an important component to a walkable hamlet. As a first priority, new sidewalks connections should be established in areas where there currently are none in order to connect the full network. These areas include the south side of West Nyack Road, the east side of Sickletown Road and areas where parking spaces back out into the roadway. For pedestrian safety, the existing asphalt sidewalk paths should be upgraded wherever possible to include a buffer strip which separates the pedestrian path from the roadway, and provide ample width. This buffer strip can also be used as a planted area for the incorporation of street trees, flowers and grass to help beautify the hamlet.

Given the constraints of slopes, retaining walls, trees, utilities and other obstructions in some areas of the hamlet, it may not be practical to provide sidewalks on both sides of every road. In some instances, a balanced approach to preserving existing stone walls, slopes and trees may present the best result. If a sidewalk is not fully practical on one side of a road, then a nearby crossing should be provided to the sidewalk on the opposite side, if necessary. A creative sidewalk design utilizing stone retaining walls and easements from adjacent landowners may be required to provide the desired level of pedestrian connections throughout the hamlet.

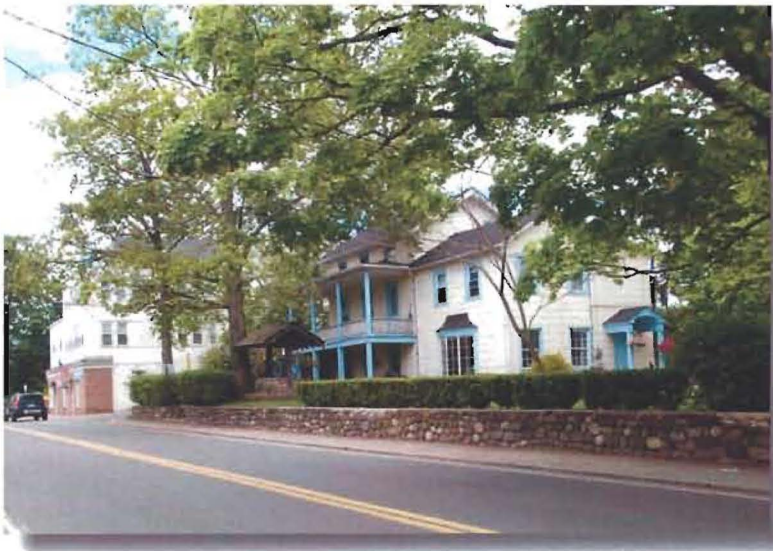
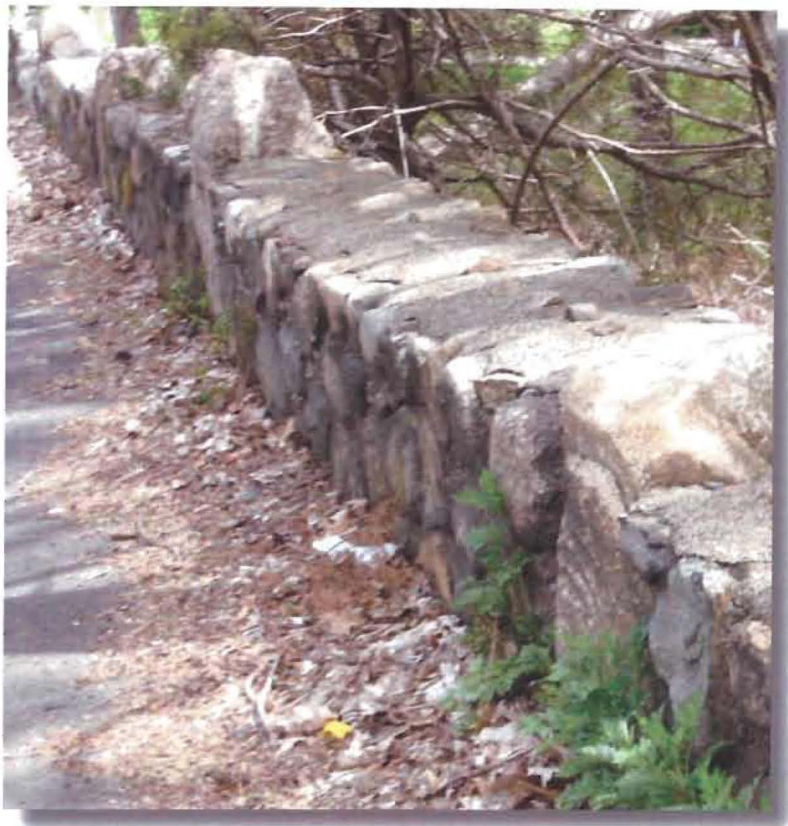


Provide sidewalks where they are needed. Sickletown Road between Route 59 and West Nyack Road is a prime example of a stretch of road through the hamlet that needs sidewalk additions and improvements.

STONE WALLS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The many stone walls found in West Nyack are an asset which helps to define and strengthen the historic character of the hamlet. At the same time, they also represent a constraint, often limiting sidewalk and roadways widths in some areas. These should be preserved and maintained wherever possible and could act as a design inspiration to any future improvements. The existing stone walls found at the intersection of Richard’s Corners, for example, provide an excellent gateway feature which could be enhanced as a way to welcome visitors to the hamlet.



Examples of existing stone walls in West Nyack.



STONE WALLS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The existing stone walls found throughout the hamlet should be preserved whenever possible, and any new stone wall designs added as part of future improvements should be sympathetic to their unique historic qualities. While the engineered block retaining wall systems that are available today are reliable and efficient, they often lack the visual qualities of a historic location. For this reason, any new stone wall construction proposed within the hamlet should avoid the use of engineered block walls and instead utilize the appearance of the same stone and mortar constructed walls presently there. This will help to create a sense of unity throughout and reinforce the historic feeling of the hamlet.



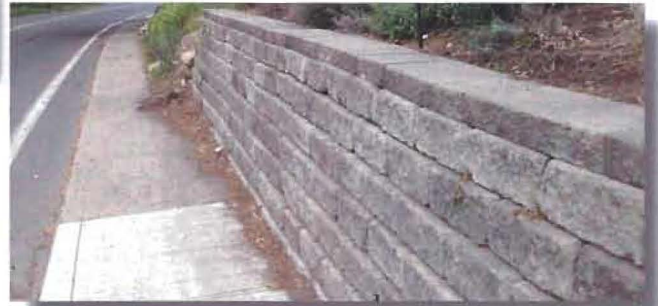
ENCOURAGE THE USE OF...

Round or irregular shaped stones, set in mortar or loosely set.



LIMIT THE USE OF...

Stacked square or rectangular shaped blocks.



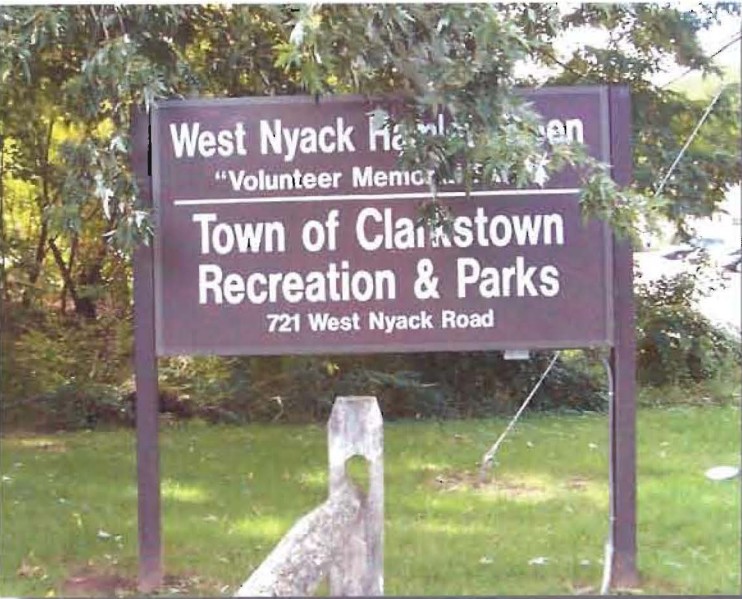
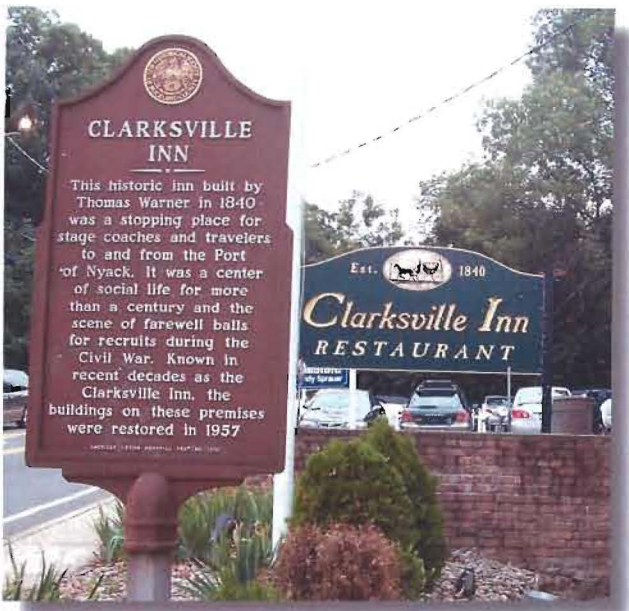
SIGNS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

West Nyack has a wide variety of signs, much of which support and reinforce the historic visual character of the hamlet. Visitors coming to the hamlet for the first time can immediately sense that this area of town is different than the surrounding neighborhoods largely due to the visual cues of these signs and architecture. For this reason, signs play an important role in shaping this local community character.

A few examples of signs found in the area however generally did not appear to fit in with the local historic character. One example of this was the relatively modern municipal sign for the West Nyack Hamlet Green, which is constructed of grey metal and can have an institutional feel. Other examples were found where signage and other advertisements created a somewhat cluttered appearance, or signs that were in relatively poor condition.

Currently, there are no signs which specifically welcome travelers or celebrate the arrival into the center of the hamlet. Such signs would be very useful in identifying the hamlet, reinforcing the historic character and creating “gateway” elements.



SIGNS

RECOMMENDATIONS

New signs in the hamlet should be designed and placed according to a set of guidelines which enhance the character and display the history and culture of West Nyack. It may be important to note that while “historic looking” signs may seem most appropriate, it is not the primary goal to create replicas of these old styles. Contemporary signs can be done tastefully which still fit in with and reinforce the historic charm of the hamlet. Sign guidelines should be developed for the hamlet with these goals in mind, taking into consideration colors, sizing, materials and lighting methods. These guidelines could be used to slowly phase out and replace any existing signs which do not fit in with the historic character as the community matures.

Signs should be encouraged which generally use natural materials such as wood or stone, with relief or engraved lettering and subdued colors whenever possible. Surface-applied letters could also be encouraged for facade signs in lieu of traditional sign “boards”. Signs which utilize light colored lettering on darker backgrounds should be encouraged.

“Welcome to West Nyack” signs should be located at the four primary entrance areas to the hamlet center. The existing park sign could also be upgraded to achieve a more “hometown” look as part of any park improvements, and relocated to a more visible location.

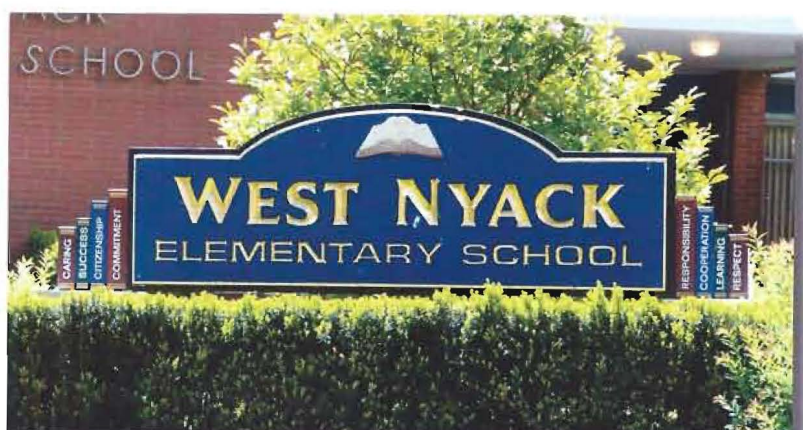
The historic markers found throughout the hamlet should be kept in good condition and repainted as necessary. The hamlet could also consider a special street sign program which could follow a common theme.



Welcome to Historic West Nyack signs, similar to the idea shown above, should be located at the four primary entrance roads into the center of the hamlet. The sign should be designed to fit the character of the hamlet and use materials consistent with the local theme.



Example of a new sign in the hamlet which blends into the historic character, using attractive external lighting. Internally lit signs should be discouraged, or thoughtfully handled.



LIGHTING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Currently the majority of street lighting in West Nyack is provided by overhead cobra head lamps attached to utility poles. While functional, the character of the hamlet could be enhanced by more pedestrian-scale lighting with a style that celebrates its historic charm.

Lighting at various locations in the hamlet, such as the park and near the Village Square plaza building, provides pedestrian scale lighting, however there is an overall lack of consistency. Additionally, the quality of light in the existing park lamps is considered too cool and bright by many residents, and is left on too long into the evening.



Existing pedestrian-scale lighting found in the West Nyack Park.



Existing cobra head lighting found throughout the area does not fit in with the historic character or scale of the local neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATIONS

New street lamps should be provided along the primary roads in the hamlet which are scaled more for pedestrian traffic than motor vehicle speeds. Pole and fixtures should be selected which are appropriate, or sympathetic, to the character of the hamlet.

While “historic” styles may sometimes seem most appropriate, it should be noted that direct historic replication isn’t always the goal. More contemporary fixtures could be selected which are tasteful and provide more appealing lighting effects. The more important goals are a consistent hamlet theme and the quality of the nighttime illumination.

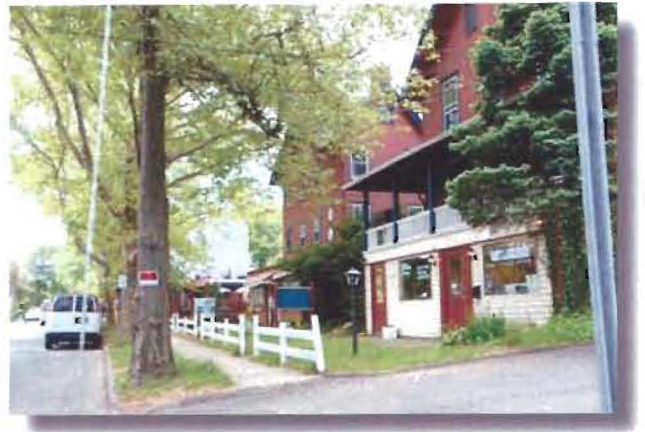
Lamp types should be selected which provide a sufficient, but soft, warmer light that does not produce undue glare. Shielded fixtures which direct the light downward could be used to reduce such glare and protect the night sky from washout.

Poles should be placed far enough from the curb to accommodate arms for hanging planters, banners or flags if the hamlet wishes to add them. Such features may be used to provide a festive touch to special events such as flags for Memorial Day or the Fourth of July, or flower baskets to mark the beginning of Spring.

PRESENCE AND CHARACTER

EXISTING CONDITIONS

West Nyack Hamlet has many positive elements contributing to its existing charm and character. Future improvements to the streetscape should honor, celebrate, and enhance them. In addition to the individual elements highlighted throughout this document such as the stone walls, signs, trees, and lighting, several principles should be kept in mind when developing guidelines and designs to shape the future of the hamlet.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Revise the existing zoning code to permit buildings up closer to the street in keeping with the historic context of the commercial areas. Mixed-use structures should be permitted and encouraged in commercial areas, with the possibility of dwelling units in the floors above.

Reduce the amount of parking area dedicated to the front of the buildings and instead encourage such parking areas to the side or rear of the property instead.

Protect and enhance the existing architecture of the hamlet with the use of architectural guidelines or standards.

Create a strong, open relationship between the sidewalk and commercial buildings to draw people to storefronts. Remove barriers which discourage people from walking up and viewing shopfront areas, such as parking areas or fences. Enhance these building entryways with landscape plantings, potted planters and pedestrian seating.

Maintain a soft, natural appearance throughout the hamlet with grass, flowers and other landscaping. Most buffer areas between the sidewalk and the road should be landscaped with grass, trees and flowers (instead of any hardscapes such as a brick or pavers) where possible.

Subdued, pedestrian scale lighting and signs should be provided throughout the hamlet as a consistent theme.



Illustrative rendering of a streetscape character envisioned for the West Nyack Hamlet.

WEST NYACK WAY - INTERSECTION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing intersection at West Nyack Way was identified by many residents as being a problem area. The triangular shape of the central island and the angle of approach creates a blind spot for motorists, and is the source of many near misses and accidents. Additionally, the central island is home to a monument and historic marker which is not easily accessible. This intersection marks an important arrival point for travelers entering the hamlet from Route 59, and could be improved.



The existing intersection of West Nyack Way, West Nyack Road and Klein Ave.

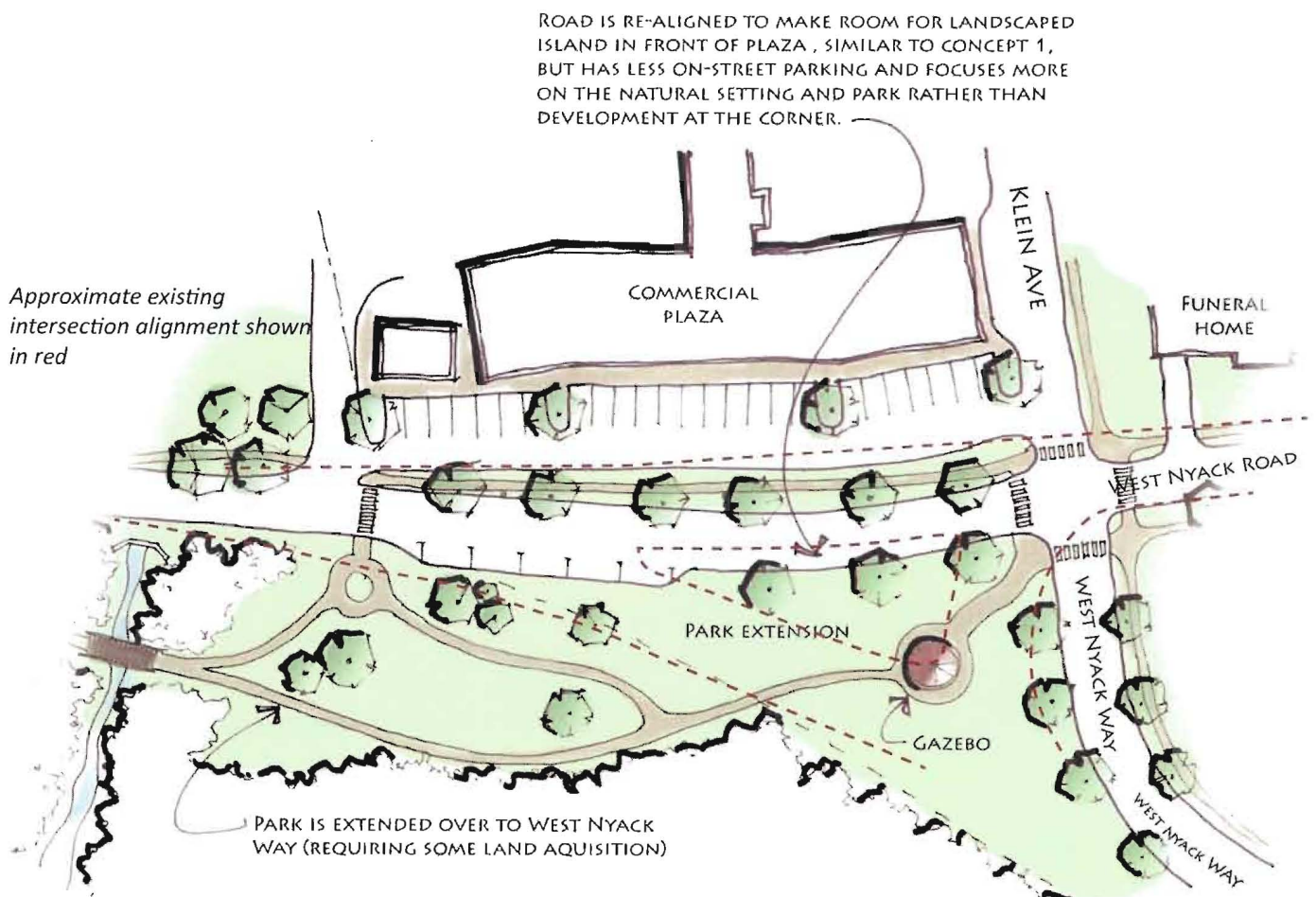


WEST NYACK WAY - INTERSECTION

CONCEPT 1

In determining potential improvements for this intersection, a design was proposed for Concept 1 which would re-align West Nyack Road slightly to the south and eliminate the triangular island in lieu of a more traditional “4-way” crossing. The re-alignment of this road provides several advantages. First, the straight 4-way intersection would simplify the travel paths and eliminate the blind spot condition. The area once used for the triangular island and road could then be reclaimed for other uses, such as an extension of the park. The park could then act as a gateway greeting to travelers as they approach the hamlet from Route 59. This concept emphasizes a more natural setting hamlet gateway at this intersection as green space which connects to the existing park. The extent of the development of this expanded park and pathways and would depend on the boundaries or incorporation of nearby wetlands.

Finally, re-aligning West Nyack Road to the south would free up additional space to provide sidewalk, street trees and landscaping in front of the commercial plaza. On-street parking could also be provided here as well. This design would require a more detailed feasibility study as well as some property acquisition from adjacent landowners before it could be pursued.



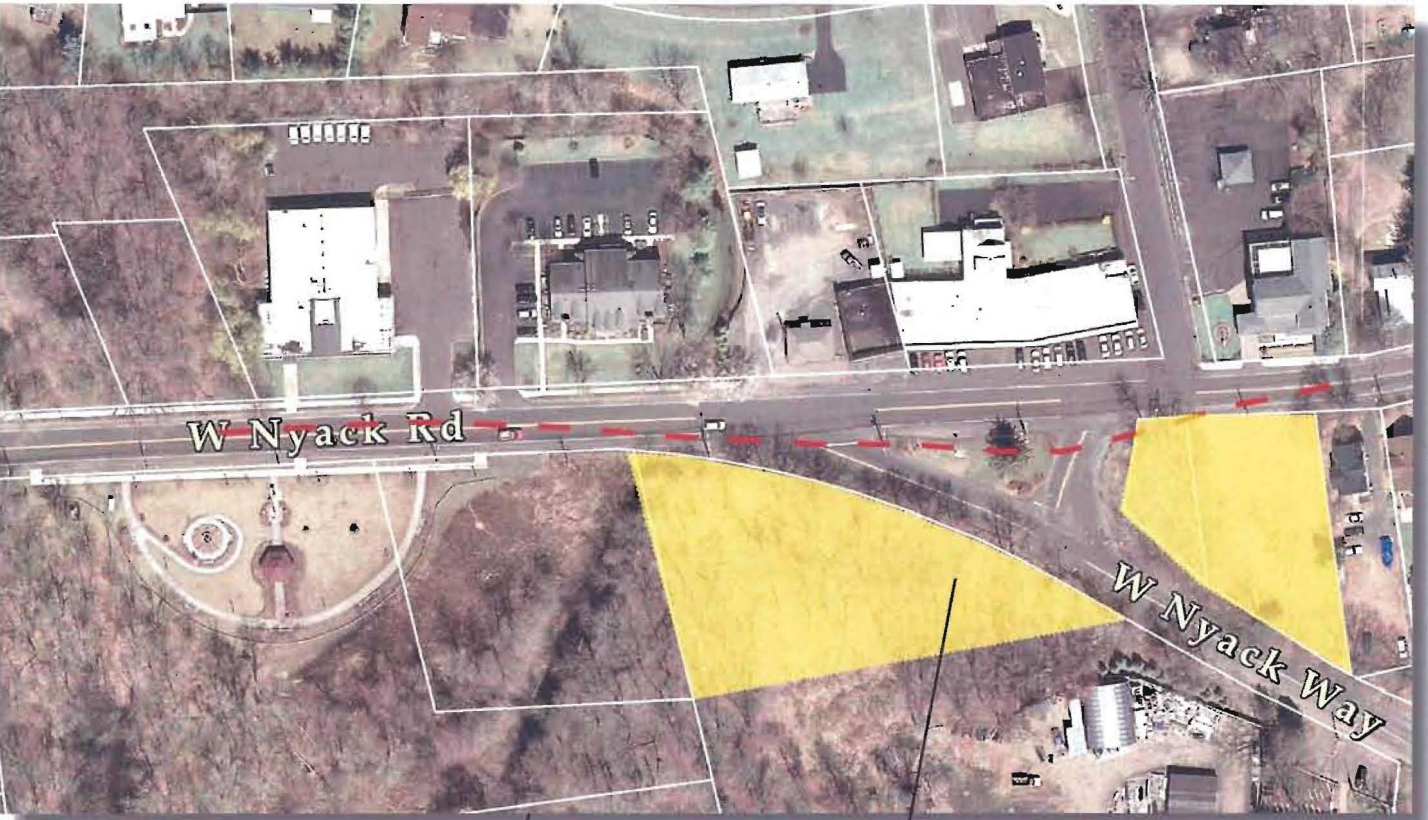
WEST NYACK WAY - INTERSECTION

CONCEPT 2

A second concept is to leave the alignment as it currently is and simply provide landscape enhancements. Because Concepts 1 requires land acquisitions from adjacent landowners, it is not as easily pursued. In the event the land acquisitions are considered not feasible, enhancements to the existing intersection should be considered instead.

LAND ACQUISITION

In order to further pursue these concepts and determine feasibility, the Town of Clarkstown has been conducting negotiations with a number of landowners within the hamlet. The successful negotiation and cooperation with willing landowners is key to the realization of these hamlet design improvements.



Proposed road centerline for
Concept 1

Parcels needed for Concept 1 high-
lighted in yellow

RICHARDS CORNERS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Richard's Corners is an important gateway to West Nyack Hamlet at the north end of Strawtown Road. Currently the area is celebrated with stone walls and a flower garden which is maintained by a local garden club. Although it already marks a very pleasant arrival area to the hamlet, some minor improvements could also be considered to enhance this gateway even further.



Currently the intersection boasts attractive stone walls, a flower garden and historic markers which highlight interesting facts about the area.



Additional landscape enhancements could further emphasize the hamlet gateway, as well a Welcome to West Nyack Hamlet sign. The sign could be incorporated into the circular opening of the existing stone wall (top photo where flag is), and illuminated at night from small lights in the flowers beneath it.

CLARKSVILLE INN AND INTERSECTION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The intersection of West Nyack Road and Strawtown / Sickletown Roads is central to the hamlet, featuring the Clarksville Inn as a celebrated and historic structure at the corner. There are sidewalks at three of the four corners, though no sidewalk or crosswalks connecting them to the Village Square building or parking areas. Some on street parking opportunities could be formalized here. This area illustrates the best parking alignment, with the parking lots notably tucked behind and/or to the side of all the buildings found here, although the parking behind the Clarksville Inn could be organized better.



The Historic Clarksville Inn and marker describing the history of the name of the hamlet and the intersection

CLARKSVILLE INN AND INTERSECTION

RECOMMENDATIONS

The on-street parking spaces in front of the Clarksville Inn could be formalized with curb bulb-outs and striping to define them better and create a right turn lane. The existing parking area behind the Clarksville Inn could be reorganized slightly better, with a consolidation into a single curb-cut from West Nyack Road. A reorganization of the parking lot here could open up more spaces, or alternately could create room for an additional small building to be added.

The sidewalks and crosswalks in this area should be continued to connect to all four corners.



SECTION III - DESIGN CONCEPTS

The concepts illustrated on the following pages provides an overview of the principles and recommendations that have evolved from the visioning process. These ideas provide a basis for enhancing and celebrating the unique features of West Nyack as design and improvement projects proceed.

HAMLET GATEWAY AREAS

VISION PRINCIPLES

- Strengthen the sense of identity and arrival by creating strong “gateways entrances” to the hamlet, including at Richard’s Corners, Western Highway, Sickletown Road, West Nyack Road, and West Nyack Way approaches.
- Provide Welcome to Historic West Nyack signs at these gateway areas to the hamlet.
- Soften and improve the feel of these main gateway approaches into the hamlet with new landscaping treatments.
- Use the recurring theme of low stone walls to frame these gateway areas into the hamlet, similar to the stone walls on either side of the Richard’s Corners intersection.
- Improve the appearance of the Route 59 overpass areas by shielding the bridge abutments with the new low stone walls, landscaping and welcome signs.





STRAWTOWN ROAD

VISION PRINCIPLES

- Work with the County and adjoining property owners to provide a continued pedestrian connection up to the Public Library with new sidewalks and crosswalks where space permits.
- Improve overall pedestrian safety of existing sidewalks by replacing asphalt sidewalks adjacent to the road with new concrete sidewalks which provide a buffer from the roadway.
- Provide new street trees between the roadway and the sidewalk where appropriate.
- Reduce sidewalk obstacles where possible.
- Reduce the overall number and width of curb-cuts where feasible.
- Reduce front yard parking areas in lieu of side and rear yard parking arrangements.
- Preserve existing trees where possible by meandering any new sidewalk locations around them.

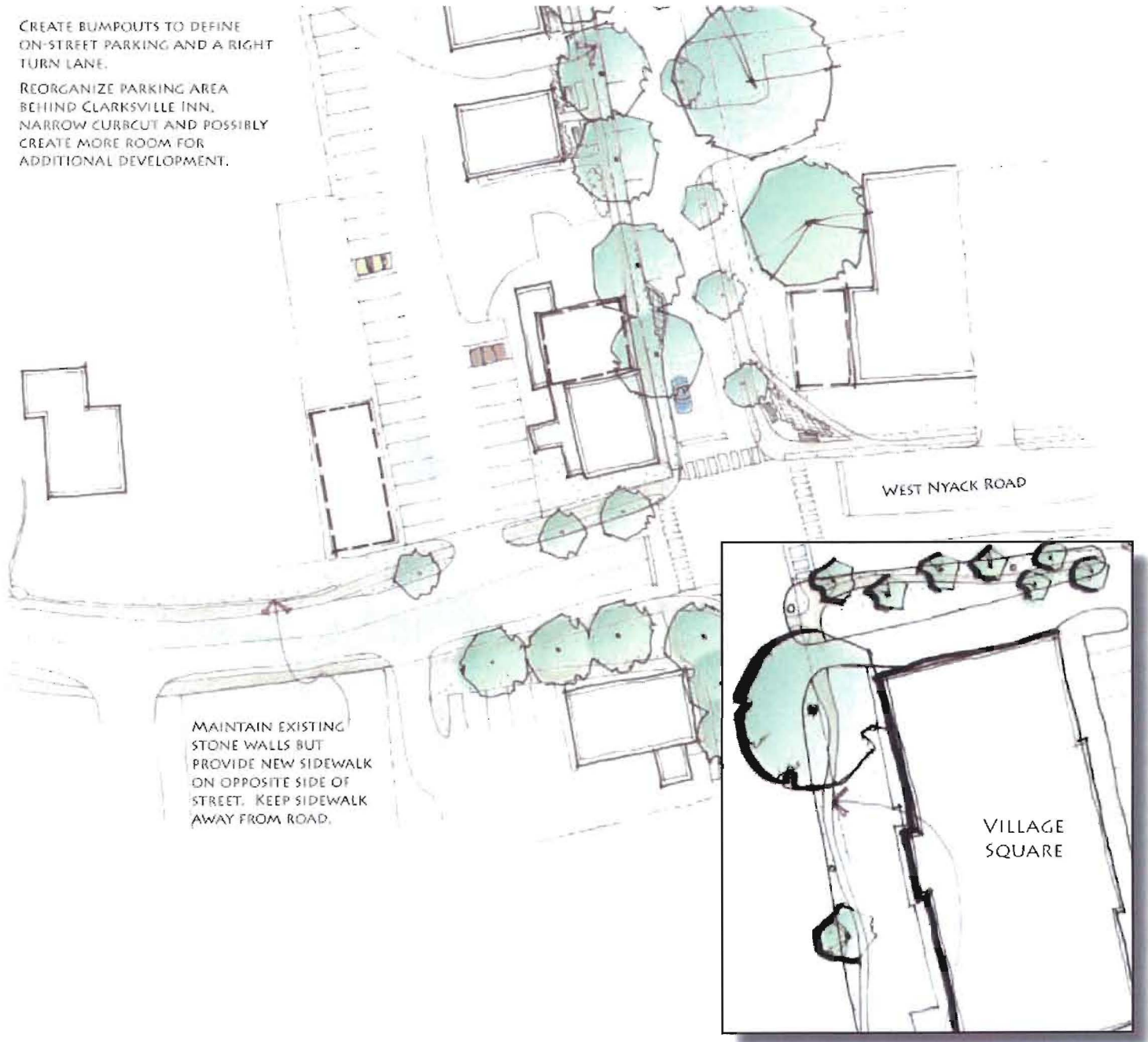




WEST NYACK ROAD / SICKLETOWN ROAD INTERSECTION

VISION PRINCIPLES

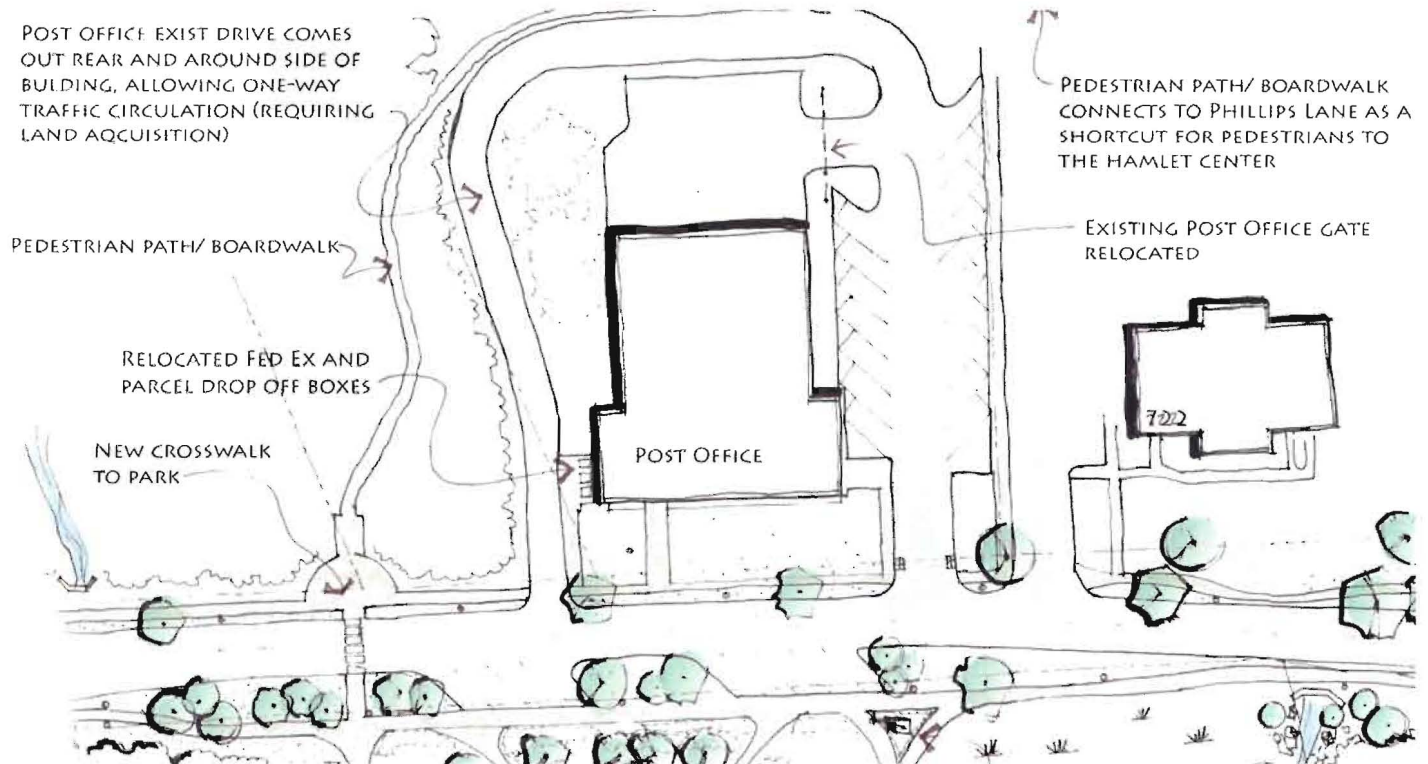
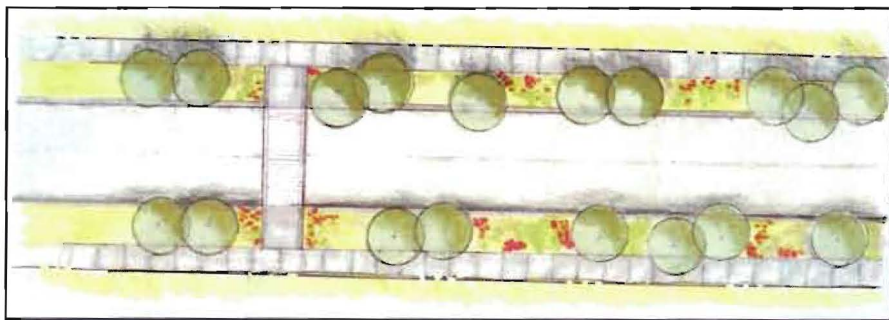
- Provide a safer pedestrian environment with new crosswalks and sidewalks buffered from the roadway.
- Provide new sidewalk connections from the main intersection to the residential neighborhoods south of Route 59.
- Preserve existing trees by meandering sidewalks around them, creating a more informal path.
- Improve the visual appearance with new landscaping.
- Reinforce the smaller hamlet character with pedestrian scaled sidewalk lighting in lieu of the overhead cobra lights.



CONCEPT PLAN - WEST NYACK ROAD & POST OFFICE

VISION PRINCIPLES

- Provide more pedestrian connectivity by adding new sidewalks on either side of the road where they are currently missing.
- Improve the visual appearance of the road with added street trees, landscaping and pedestrian scaled lighting.
- Provide additional on-street or public parking opportunities, particularly near the Park
- Help to slow traffic and provide improved pedestrian safety with additional crosswalks, particularly near intersections and the Park / Post Office.
- Investigate improved circulation at the Post Office with a one-way travel route for exiting.
- Reduce visual and noise impacts from the Post Office to adjoining residential properties with additional screening.



DRAFT JAN 2010

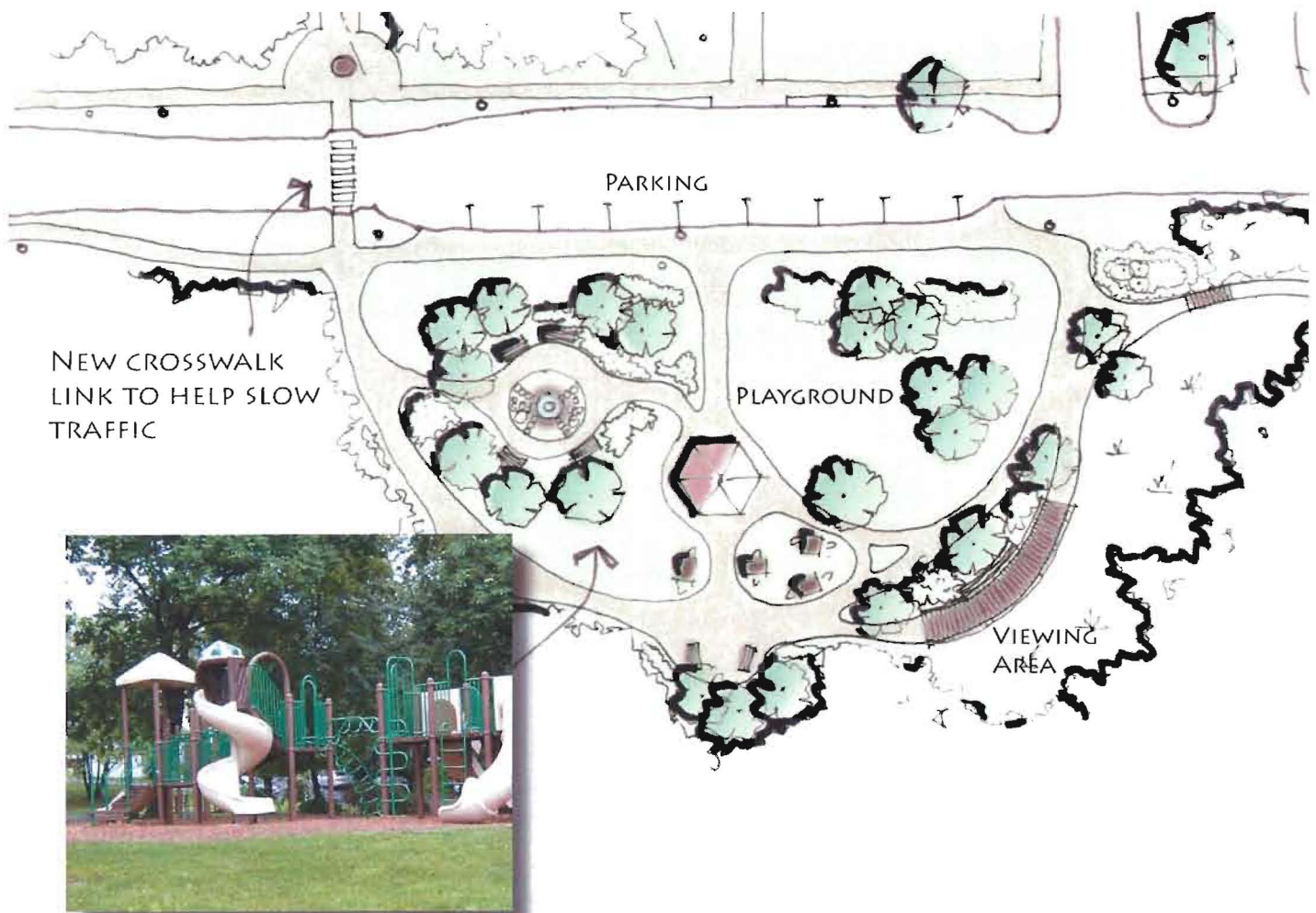
West Nyack Hamlet Vision Plan

37

WEST NYACK PARK

VISION PRINCIPLES

- Create a more intriguing and inviting outdoor space.
- Improve the visual appearance of the Park with additional landscaping and amenities.
- Encourage more use of the space by providing nearby parking.
- Allow parking to be used as overflow for the Post Office, and vice versa.
- Provide pedestrian connections to other parts of the hamlet with new sidewalks and a crosswalk to the Post Office.
- Encourage more activities within the park by providing new elements such as a playground, picnic tables and other seating areas.
- Provide a sense of place by buffering the Park from the adjacent roadway with additional landscaping.
- Expand circulation around the outside of gazebo for a more open feel.

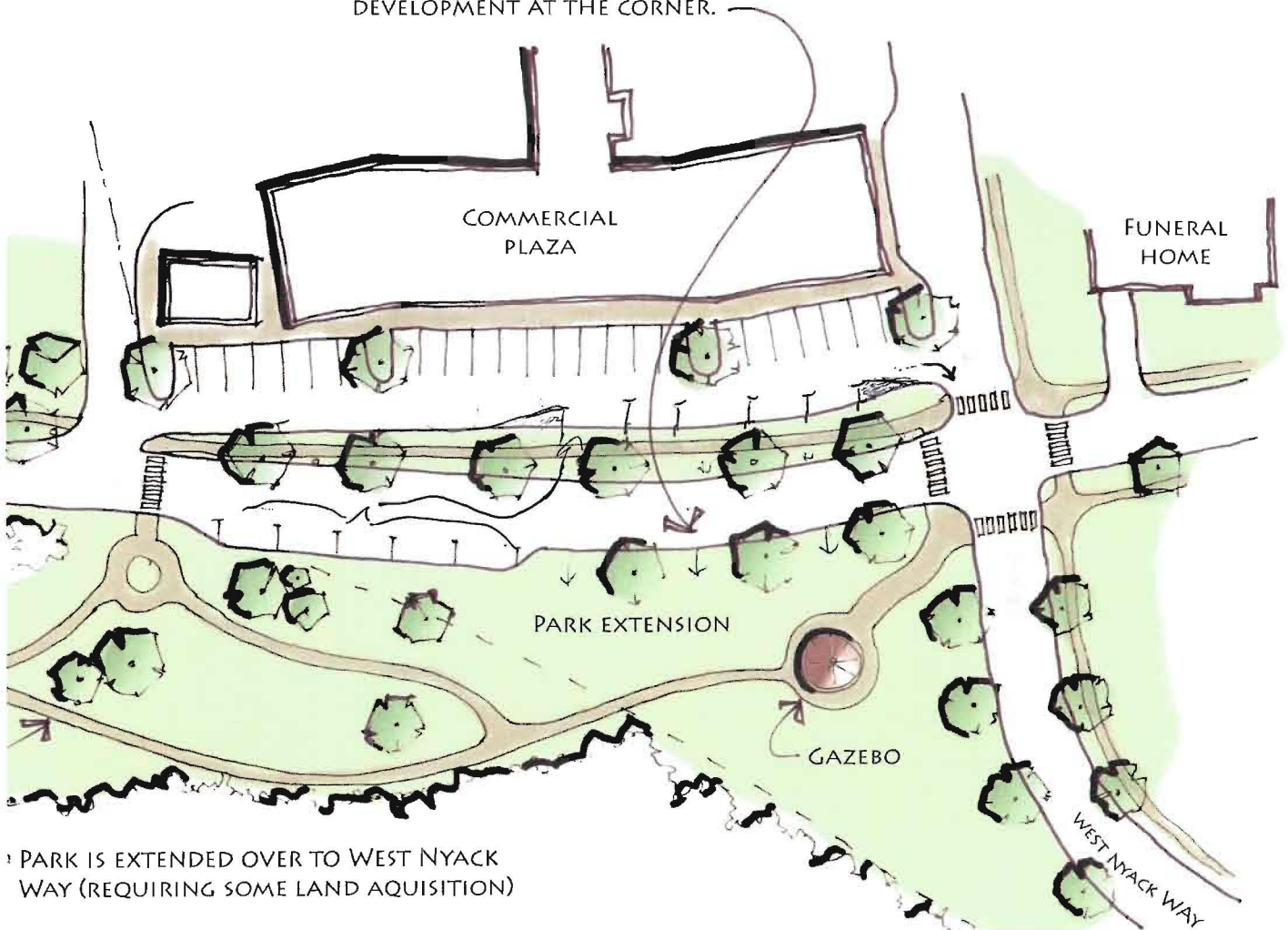


WEST NYACK WAY INTERSECTION

VISION PRINCIPLES

- Create a safer and more attractive intersection.
- Create a more pedestrian friendly environment with new sidewalks and crosswalks where they are currently missing.
- Continue the continuity of interest and pedestrian connections from the Post Office and Park to the neighborhood on the other side of this intersection.
- Provide an improved “gateway” design to this entrance into the hamlet.
- Reduce conditions where parked vehicles are backing out into the road right-of-way.
- Make better use of the existing intersection triangle so that it becomes a place that people can go to.

ROAD IS RE-ALIGNED TO MAKE ROOM FOR LANDSCAPED ISLAND IN FRONT OF PLAZA, SIMILAR TO CONCEPT 1, BUT HAS LESS ON-STREET PARKING AND FOCUSES MORE ON THE NATURAL SETTING AND PARK RATHER THAN DEVELOPMENT AT THE CORNER.



WEST NYACK ROAD - EAST

VISION PRINCIPLES

- Provide additional public parking where feasible, both on-street and off-street.
- Maintain and strengthen the year-round economic vitality of this business area.
- Create a more pedestrian friendly environment with new sidewalks and crosswalks where they are currently missing.
- Work with property owners to identify alternative parking designs to reduce conflicts with pedestrians.
- Identify areas for outdoor cafe space in concert with property owners.



ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

HAMLET CENTER ZONING

A number of elements in the existing zoning code do not support, or work counter to, some of the goals and ideas identified in this Vision Plan. An update to the zoning should be considered which modifies these elements to align with the concept of the historic hamlet. These elements include:

- The current area and bulk regulations do not permit buildings to be built near the road where many existing structures were historically placed. The front and side yard setbacks should be reduced to allow new construction to align with the historic environment. Likewise, parking areas should be moved to the side or rear of buildings, and this could be mandated in the zoning as well.
- The current area and bulk regulations do not permit 2-story structures to be built unless they are set back far from the road. The building heights should be changed to allow multiple story buildings at their front setback limit.
- The current zoning does not permit mixed use occupancies or residential over commercial. Other hamlets, such as Valley Cottage and Congers, do have an overlay which permits this type of occupancy. The existing zoning should be modified to permit this, similar to the way it is done in the other hamlets, although custom tailored to the conditions of West Nyack. Likewise, other uses which are not in keeping with a historic hamlet, such as car dealerships or gas stations, could instead be removed from the list of allowable uses.
- Other elements of the existing zoning which could be improved are the introduction of architectural guidelines, sign guidelines, lighting guidelines and a review of the current parking requirements.

The changes to the existing zoning could be handled by creating a new zoning district for the commercial areas of the hamlet which is more suitable to the historic setting.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP NOVEMBER 16, 2009

A second public workshop was held in the fall of 2009 to present the draft vision plan ideas which had been prepared. Similar to the previous public workshop, a presentation was made and then the discussion was opened up for the public to comment. A summary of the public comments recorded at the meeting is included in Appendix A.



Supervisor Gromack address the large crowd that attended the second public workshop in November 2009

Participants at the meeting indicated they were generally in favor of several of the roadway improvement concepts, particularly the re-alignment of West Nyack Way and some of the overall streetscape enhancements. There also appeared to be general support for the vision plan’s emphasis on protecting the historic character of the hamlet, including the trees, natural stone walls and other elements.

In addition to the physical improvements however, residents felt that there was also a need to improve enforcement of property maintenance to better preserve the historic character of the hamlet. Non-conforming signs, trash storage and general property upkeep issues were considered to be holding the hamlet back from its full potential. The Route 59 right-of-way area was specifically noted as being untidy and in need of cleanup. It was recommended by several residents that these issues should ideally be addressed in addition to any physical design changes.

While several of the proposed concepts were received favorably, many of the participants were in agreement that there were also “bigger picture” issues which needed to be addressed before any real revitalization work should begin. These issues specifically included flooding and truck traffic within the hamlet. Many residents felt that these issues should be improved before other changes are made. It was acknowledged during the workshop that while these were known issues, they are not as easily fixable as other suggested improvements were.

While truck traffic was a recurring concern, no solutions appeared readily available during the discussion. The alternative of re-routing of trucks to different roads concerned several residents who did not want the traffic on their roads, and the local roadway system did not offer many alternative routes. Conversely, several business owners noted that these same drivers sometimes frequent their business, and also local truck traffic requires access to the hamlet for commercial deliveries. Several residents also noted that traffic safety overall was an important consideration, and that many vehicles fail to properly stop at the intersection of West Nyack Road and Western Highway. It was suggested that these issues could be investigated as part of the traffic study.

The issue of recurring flooding was also discussed at length. It was acknowledged during the discussion that several of the contributing factors of the flooding were believed to be part of a much larger watershed area well beyond the area of the immediate hamlet. This system includes various waterways north of the hamlet including the Hackensack River as well as drainage conduits all the way down into neighboring New Jersey. A fix of all these contributing factors would likely involve a comprehensive analysis of this much larger tributary area, and could involve multiple municipal areas. It was suggested

that dredging or widening of the Hackensack River could help to resolve some of the flooding issues, as well as upgraded culverts beneath Route 59.

Some of the proposed concepts for on-street parking at the eastern end of the study area were viewed negatively by the participants. There was concern by some business owners that they would have to give up their private parking in order to accommodate it. While it could result in an increase in the number of available parking overall, the trade-off between public vs. private spaces still seemed unfavorable to some.

The proposed re-alignment of West Nyack Way was seen as generally favorable. It was questioned if such an alignment with Klein Avenue could potentially increase the number of vehicles which would use it as a shortcut around the hamlet. It was concluded that this would need to be analyzed as part of a traffic study in the following stages of the project, and could be looked at more specifically then.

The addition of on-street parking, additional landscaping and a playground at the park was generally well received. Residents noted however that care should be taken not to create secluded areas or trails where children could gather unsupervised. It was also noted that one of the alternative park concepts showed a relocated clock and walkway pavers which would not be desirable, given the effort made to include them in the original design.

The concept to change the access at the Post Office was noted as being a favorable improvement, as it could alleviate vehicle conflicts pulling in and out of the property. It was noted that additional screening of this site would help to reduce interference with neighboring residential properties, particularly with regard to vehicle noise and headlights.

Participants also suggested that the plan could include more “green” initiatives, such as energy-efficient lighting, reduced impervious surface areas and other environmentally friendly initiatives.

As a result of the comments received at the last workshop, some of the recommendations included in the draft vision plan have been revised or removed.

SECTION IV - CONCLUSIONS

GENERAL

The Hamlet of West Nyack has many excellent qualities which help maintain its quaint and small town atmosphere. At the same time however, there are some distracting features which could be improved, as well as new opportunities which can be realized. Care should be taken to see that any changes introduced to the hamlet as part of this effort build upon and extend the positive character which already exists wherever possible. There is a great deal of potential for the hamlet to be improved, and not many communities are given a design opportunity such as this.

It may be important to note that not all of the recommendations of this Vision Plan may be feasible due to physical or economic constraints. The Town may have to weigh the relative costs and benefits of several ideas when considering which elements have priority over others. Likewise, the Town may have to consider the overall public benefit of certain improvements and the amount of public support. In cases where there may be mixed support for certain concepts, the Town should consider what choices would provide the most community benefit overall in the long term.

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the Vision Plan concepts included in this document should be pursued during the next step of the project during a design development phase. Specifically, this next phase should work to refine some of the concepts presented in this document with the following goals and elements as priority:

Vision Principles

- Providing new sidewalks, crosswalks and other pedestrian amenities where they currently are missing to continue connections through the central hamlet area;
- Upgrading existing sidewalks in locations where they are very close to the roadway or otherwise constrained;
- Providing new street trees and pedestrian scaled lighting where it is most appropriate. New lighting should replace existing overhead street lighting wherever possible;
- Providing additional public parking opportunities where most feasible, particularly near the Park and eastern end of West Nyack Road;
- Realignment of West Nyack Way intersection, with new greenspace or park area to replace existing triangle.
- A reduction of front-yard parking arrangements in lieu of side or rear yard parking arrangements.
- A reduction of front-in parking conditions which do not provide safe sidewalk paths to continue through the hamlet.
- Addition of gateway improvements such as improved landscaping and welcome signs, particularly at Richard's Corners, West Nyack Way and Sickletown Road entrances.
- Inclusion of additional landscaping and playground elements at the Park.
- The inclusion of general traffic calming measures.

Elements

- Discussion and coordination with individual property owners regarding design ideas.
- Conduct a Traffic Study of the primary roadway areas, in particular any realignment of the West Nyack Way intersection.
- Request a more detailed analysis of the expected costs and feasibility of relocating the overhead utility lines from Orange & Rockland, Verizon and Cablevision.
- Revise the existing zoning requirements to match the desired qualities of the hamlet. These should include building area and bulk regulations, allowable uses as well as architectural and sign standards.
- Additional elements, as recommended below.

DRAINAGE / FLOODING

Flooding is a major concern shared by many residents. The yearly spring inundation occurs along the Hackensack River and throughout the wetlands in and around West Nyack Park. The water has a general north to south flow through the hamlet, however, not all of the contributing factors have been identified. A more comprehensive drainage study is recommended to be conducted by the town in order to identify the main causes of the flooding problems and determine the best mitigation strategies.

Considering the length of time and complexity which would likely be involved in this study, the Town may want to consider interim drainage improvements which might anticipate the likely recommendations of such a study. Such interim improvements could include increasing the size of drainage culverts underneath the primary roadways. Such improvements could potentially reduce the flooding in the short term and could also allow the Town to continue with hamlet streetscape improvements without the need to upgrade the culverts underneath the road later on. While it had been suggested that the streetscape improvements should be postponed until after the flooding issues are addressed, this delay could be several years. It is not known what the future economic or political priorities might be at a later date, or if a new administration would still support the hamlet revitalization. It is therefore recommended that a more “parallel-track” approach to both the flooding and streetscape work could be considered.

TRUCK TRAFFIC

The truck traffic through West Nyack Hamlet is another concern shared by residents, not just for disturbance to local character, but for pedestrian and vehicular safety as well. Similar to the issue of flooding, this does not presently appear to have a readily available solution. As part of the recommended roadway changes, the Town will have to conduct a traffic study. It is recommended that the Town include the issue of truck traffic as part of this study to identify potential alternate routes or mitigation measures that can be incorporated into any final hamlet improvement plans.

